



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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USDA Gathers Data About Farm Labor

COLUMBIA, MISSOURI – March 15, 2021 -- The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will conduct its biannual Agricultural Labor Survey during the second half of April. The survey will collect information about hired labor from more than 1300 Missouri farmers and ranchers.

"The beginning of the year is the time when agricultural producers plan out the rest of their growing seasons and it is a great time to assess on-farm labor needs," said Robert Garino, NASS Missouri Statistician. "The data that farmers provide through NASS's Agricultural Labor Survey allow federal policymakers to base farm labor policies on accurate information."

USDA and the U.S. Department of Labor use statistics gathered in the Agricultural Labor Survey to establish minimum wage rates for agricultural workers, administer farm labor recruitment and placement service programs, and assist legislators in determining labor policies.

In the survey, NASS asks participants to answer a variety of questions about hired farm labor

on their operations, including total number of hired farm workers, the total hours worked, and total base and gross wages paid for the weeks of January 10-16 and April 11-17. Survey participants can respond online at agcounts.usda.gov or by mail.

"By asking about two separate time periods each time we collect data during the year, we are able to publish quarterly data and capture seasonal variation," said Garino. "This approach reduces the number of times we survey farm businesses while ensuring that accurate and timely data are available."

NASS will compile, analyze, and publish survey results in the May 26 *Farm Labor* report. All previous *Farm Labor* publications are available online at <https://usda.library.cornell.edu/concern/publications/x920fw89s>. For more information on NASS surveys and reports, call the NASS Heartland Regional Office at (800) 551-1014.

Average Yearly Wage Rates 2020 (\$/hr)

	Cornbelt I	Cornbelt II
	IL, IN, OH	IA, MO
All Farm Labor	15.99	15.94
Ag Equipment Operators	16.38	15.84
Animal Workers	14.57	15.20
Crop & Animal Workers	15.31	15.37
Crop Workers	15.61	15.54
Packers & Packagers	14.72	(S)

(S) Insufficient number of reports to establish an estimate.

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NASS is the federal statistical agency responsible for producing official data about U.S. agriculture and is committed to providing timely, accurate and useful statistics in service to U.S. agriculture.

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